

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A cooperative spam processing system comprising:
a plurality of e-mail clients communicatively linked to one another; ~~and,~~
a plurality of cooperative spam control processors, each of said processor coupled to a
corresponding one of said e-mail clients, wherein said cooperative spam control processors
comprises programming for detecting spam and for notifying others of said cooperative spam
control processors of said spam; and,
a group administrator for said e-mail clients, said group administrator having authority to
establish an agreement to exchange spam notifications with other groups of e-mail clients having
respective cooperative spam control processors.
2. Canceled.
3. Canceled.
4. Canceled.
5. (Currently Amended) A cooperative spam control method comprising the steps of:
accepting an electronic spam notification received from a peer e-mail recipient in a
common computing group identifying a spam message received by said peer e-mail recipient;
storing said notification; ~~and,~~
if an e-mail is subsequently received which corresponds to said identified spam message,
processing said received e-mail as spam; and,

consulting a peer policy for said peer e-mail recipient comprising rules for handling e-mail identified as spam by said peer e-mail recipient;

heeding said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be heeded; and,

ignoring said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be ignored; and,

overriding said notification where said e-mail message meets criteria established in said policy for overriding a spam notification.

6. Canceled.

7. Canceled.

8. Canceled.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 7~~ claim 5, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting an internally managed local peer policy.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 7~~ claim 5, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting a centrally managed remote peer policy.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 6~~ claim 5, further comprising the steps of:

establishing an agreement with a different computing group for exchanging spam notifications;

forwarding spam notifications from individual peer e-mail recipients in said common computing group to said different computing group;

receiving spam notifications from said different computing group; and,

storing said received spam notifications in individual peer e-mail recipients in said common computing group.

12. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for cooperative spam control, the computer program comprising a routine set of instructions which when executed by a machine cause the machine to perform the steps of:

accepting an electronic spam notification received from a peer e-mail recipient in a common computing group identifying a spam message received by said peer e-mail recipient;

storing said notification; ~~and,~~

if an e-mail is subsequently received which corresponds to said identified spam message, processing said received e-mail as spam; and,

consulting a peer policy for said peer e-mail recipient comprising rules for handling e-mail identified as spam by said peer e-mail recipient;

heeding said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be heeded; and,

ignoring said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be ignored; and,

overriding said notification where said e-mail message meets criteria established in said policy for overriding a spam notification.

13. Canceled.

14. Canceled.

15. Canceled.

16. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of ~~claim 14~~ claim 12, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting an internally managed local peer policy.

17. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of ~~claim 14~~ claim 12, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting a centrally managed remote peer policy.

18. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of ~~claim 13~~ claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

establishing an agreement with a different computing group for exchanging spam notifications;

forwarding spam notifications from individual peer e-mail recipients in said common computing group to said different computing group;

receiving spam notifications from said different computing group; and,

storing said received spam notifications in individual peer e-mail recipients in said
common computing group.